THE

WHEEL OF FORTUNE;

A COMEDY,

IN FIVE ACTS;

AS PERFORMED AT THE

THEATRE ROYAL, DRURY LANE.

BY RICHARD CUMBERLAND, ESQ.

PRINTED UNDER THE AUTHORITY OF THE MANAGERS FROM THE PROMPT BOOK.

WITH REMARKS

BY MRS. INCHBALD.

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REMARKS.

Never was there one play taken from another with such ingenuity, such nice art, and so little injury to either,—as this play has been taken from the German "Misanthropy and Repentance;" leaving still the German to be translated into English by the title of "The Stranger."

It is said, Mr. Cumberland merely saw a critique on Kotzebue's drama, in a review, some years before it was brought upon the London stage; and from thence collected substance for this most interesting play. But whether he had in his possession the German production or not, it is certain he is no farther indebted to the foreign author, than for a faint glimmering of plot, incident, and character; to which he has added his own original sunshine.

A reader may peruse the two plays in one evening, and yet be highly delighted with both—they are performed on succeeding nights, yet auditors go successively to the theatre; and certain spectators do not even find a resemblance between them.

"The Stranger," in one high instance, is pre-eminent to "The Wheel of Fortune"—the female character is there of infinite importance. But want of

taste is not the fault of Mr. Cumberland, for diminishing the pathos of his heroine;—his feeling and delicacy would not permit her fall from virtue. But still his gallantry ought to have furnished a lady with a little more to say in the scenes, where she is concerned, and it would have increased the interest of his play.

As it is, Kemble, in Penruddock, stands forth another Atlas with the whole *Dramatis Personæ* on his shoulders; and sure enough they are a heavy load—yet he moves steadily, firmly, and triumphantly under the burthen. Perhaps, in no one character, he performs, does Kemble evince himself a more complete master of his art than in Penruddock. The dignity of mind and mien, which appears under his old coarse clothes, and the tenderness of his love, beneath the roughest manners, are so wonderfully impressive; that an audience (without admiration for the personal or intellectual endowments of the object of his affection) commiserate his passion, and feel its power in every fibre with himself.

It is one of the reproaches on Mr. Kemble, as an actor, that he cannot paint the passion of love—nor can he, in water colours, as it is usually done—but give him materials for a bold picture, and no artist can touch the canvass like him.

The truth is, Kemble cannot love *moderately*—sighs, soft complainings, a plaintive voice, and tender looks, bespeak mere moderation—he must be struck to the heart's core, or not at all:—he must be wounded to the soul with grief, despair, or madness.

Old men, in love, have caused more laughter and

derision on the stage, than, perhaps, any other common occurrence which the dramatist has copied. Here, astonishing reverse! love, in the decline of life, constitutes a character deeply pathetic.

"You bear a strong resemblance to your mother," is a sentence, that seems to convey passion of no one kind which the heart recognizes—yet, spoken by Kemble in this part, implies more tenderness, more rooted affection, than all the love that has filled plays and novels for the whole century past.

Garrick was an artist and an actor—Kemble is merely an artist. The former could imitate the manners of the whole human race—the latter can describe only their passions. Habits belong to the mimic—mind to the professor.—It is for the advantage of the theatre, when these qualities unite—but, perhaps, it is more for the dignity of the performer to have the second, without the first-named talent.

The concluding lines of this Comedy contain a mental prescription, which, if the reader will follow, whenever his disorders require it, he will bless the day he purchased the book, and call the fee for such advice—a treasure, laid up in Heaven.

PERSONS REPRESENTED.

SIR DAVID DAW	*Mr. R. Palmer.*
TEMPEST	*Mr. King.*
PENRUDDOCK	*Mr. Kemble.*
WOODVILLE	*Mr. Whitfield.*
SYDENHAM	*Mr. Palmer.*
HENRY WOODVILLE	*Mr. C. Kemble.*
WEAZEL	*Mr. Suett.*
TRUEMAN	*Mr. Waldron.*
ATTENDANT in the House of Woodville	*Mr. Phillimore.*
JENKINS	*Mr. Bland.*
LIVERY SERVANT	*Mr. Trueman.*
SERVANTS of Sir George Penruddock	*Mr. Maddocks.* *Mr. Banks.* *Mr. Evans.* *Mr. Fisher.* *Mr. Lyons.*
SERVANT to Tempest	*Mr. Webb.*
MRS. WOODVILLE	*Mrs. Powell.*
EMILY TEMPEST	*Miss Farren.*
DAME DUNCKLEY	*Mrs. Maddocks.*
MARY	*Miss Tidswell.*

SCENE,—For the First Act, Penruddock's Cottage; for the rest, in London.

THE

WHEEL OF FORTUNE.

ACT THE FIRST.

SCENE I.

The Cottage of PENRUDDOCK, *seated in a groupe of trees, with a forest scene of wood and heath.*

Enter WEAZEL, *in a travelling dress.*

Weazel. Was ever gentle traveller, since the days of Robinson Crusoe, so put to his shifts, as I, Timothy Weazel, attorney at law? I have lost my guide, my guide has lost himself, and my horse has absconded, with bridle, saddle, and all his shoes, save one he left behind him in a slough. I saw a fellow setting springes for woodcocks, and show'd him signals of distress; but the carle ran off at the sight of me, and vanished like a jack o'lantern. If I understood the language of birds, there is not one within call to answer to a question: the creatures have got wings, and are too wise to stay in such a place.—

Enter DAME DUNCKLEY, *from the Cottage.*

Hold, hold! I see a hut, or a hovel, or a Laplander's lodge, behind these trees; and here comes one hobbling upon two shanks and a crutch, a proper sample of the soil she with-rs in.—Holloa! Dame, do you

hear? Give me a word with you, if your senses can afford it.

Dame. What would you have with me? What is your business here?

Weazel. You're right, it must be business; nobody would come here for pleasure.

Dame. No, nor is this a house of call for travellers.

Weazel. That I can believe, if you are the representative of it; that is, as I may say, *lùce clarius.*

Dame. There's no such person here, so you may go your ways, before my master sends you packing.

Weazel. You have a master, have you? Call him out, then, and let him direct me in my road to Roderick Penruddock, esquire, and I'll reward him for his pains.

Dame. You'll reward my master! Saucy companion! If Roderick Penruddock is the gentleman you want, you need not go any further—there he lives.

Weazel. There you lie, I believe. Penruddock in that cottage!

Dame. Why not? Will you face me out, who have lived with him these twenty years? And what if it be but a cottage? Content is every thing; my good master is not proud.

Weazel. Melancholy, I should think, if a constant memorandum of mortality can make him so.—He was cross'd in love in his younger days.

Dame. That I know nothing of.

Weazel. I don't say you was in the fault of it.

Dame. He is a man of few words, to be sure; but then he has a world of learning in his head; everlastingly at his books.

Weazel. Is he at 'em now?

Dame. Deep,—not to be approached.

Weazel. And alone?

Dame. To be sure: I never disturb him in his hours of study; at every other time he's kind and gentle as the dew of Heaven.

Weazel. What am I to do then, who have come some hundred miles upon his business?

Dame. Ev'n what you please, sir. I'm sure it is no business of mine, and I'll have nothing to do with it. [*Steps aside.*

Weazel. Well, if he will not welcome the good news I bring him, he must be a philosopher indeed. I'll begin my approaches cautiously, however—the door is fast—I'll touch it tenderly. [*Knocks.*] Within there! Who's at home?—Silence and famine, I should guess, for nothing stirs.

Dame. [*From aside.*] Go on, go on, my fine spark, I would not be in your place for a little. [*Exit.*

Weazel. Not yet? This will never do. Good fortune may be warranted to rap a little louder.—What hoa! [*Knocks again.*] Within, I say!—Will nobody hear me? [PENRUDDOCK *opens the casement.*]

Penrud. I hear you. What is it you want?

Weazel. With your leave, I want a few words with you.

Penrud. Send them in at the window then, and the fewer the better.

Weazel. I bring you news out of Cornwall; news of great consequence.

Penrud. Who are you, and what are you?

Weazel. Timothy Weazel, of Lestwithiel, attorney at law, and agent to Sir George Penruddock: let me into your house.

Penrud. An attorney! Keep on the outside of it, if you please; I'll deal with you in the open air. [*Shuts the casement.*]

Weazel. Here's a surly humour; here's a pretty freak of fortune, to pile bags of money on the back of an ass, who only kicks against the burden; I warrant, if the sky rained gold, this churl would not hold out his dish to catch it; but we shall soon see what stuff his philosophy is made of; good chance if

I don't shake the metaphysics out of him ere long. O ho! I've bolted him, however.—

Enter PENRUDDOCK *from the Cottage.*

Zooks! What a heathen philosopher it is!

Penrud. Now, Mr. Attorney, what have you to say, for thus disturbing my whole family? What have I done, or the poor cat, my peaceable companion, that thus the boisterous knuckles of the law should mar our meditations?

Weazel. Truly, sir, I was compelled to make some little noise; your castle is but small.

Penrud. It's big enough for my ambition.

Weazel. And passing solitary.

Penrud. I wish you had suffered it to be silent too.

Weazel. In faith, sir, if I knew how to be heard without a sound, I would gratify your wish; but if your silence suffers by my news, I hope your happiness will not.

Penrud. Happiness! What's that? I am content, I enjoy tranquillity; Heaven be thanked, I have nothing to do with happiness.

Weazel. There you are beyond me, sir. If an humble fortune and this poor cottage give you content, perhaps great riches and a splendid mansion would not add to it.

Penrud. Explain your meaning, friend: I don't understand you.

Weazel. In plain words, then, you are to know, that your rich relation, Sir George Penruddock, is deceased.

Penrud. Dead!

Weazel. Defunct; gone to his ancestors; whipped away by the sudden stroke of an apoplexy; this moment here, Heaven knows where the next: Death will do it when he likes, and how he likes; I need not remind you, sir, who are so learned a philosopher, how frail the tenure of mortality.

Penrud. You need not, indeed: if Sir George thought as seriously of death before it happened, it may have been well for him; but his thoughts, I fear, were otherwise employed.

Weazel. I much doubt if he ever thought at all; Sir George was a fine gentleman, and lived freely.

Penrud. No wonder then he died suddenly—but how does this apply to me?

Weazel. No otherwise than as you are the heir of all he died possessed of: I have the will in safe keeping about me. [*Takes out some papers.*]

Penrud. Have patience, have patience; this is somewhat sudden; I am unprepared for such an event; 'twas never in my contemplation: I was in no habits with Sir George, never courted him, never corresponded with him: the small annuity, 'tis true, on which I have subsisted, was charged on his estate, and regularly paid, but here he never came; man could not be more opposite to man; he worshipped Fortune, I despised her; I studied closely, he gamed incessantly—

Weazel. And won abundantly—if money be your passion, you'll find plenty of it.

Penrud. Money! what should I do with money?

Weazel. Money indeed!—why money is—in short, what is it not?

Penrud. Not health, methinks, not life—for he, that had it, died.

Weazel. But you, that have it, live—and is there nothing that can tempt you? Recollect—books—money will buy books; nay more, it will buy those who write them.

Penrud. It will so.

Weazel. 'Twill purchase panegyrics, odes, and dedications—

Penrud. I can't gainsay it.

Weazel. House, table, equipage, attendants—

Penrud. I have all those: what else?

Weazel. Ah, sir, you surely can't forget there are such things in this world as beauty, love, irresistible woman—[DAME DUNCKLEY *crosses the stage.*]

Penrud. I keep a woman; she visits me every day, makes my bed, sweeps my house, cooks my dinner, and is seventy years of age—yet I resist her.

Weazel. I could say something to that, but I am afraid it will offend you.

Penrud. Say on boldly; never fear me.

Weazel. Why truly, sir, I find you of a very different temper from what I expected: I should doubt if your philosophy has made you insensible; I am sure it has not made you proud.

Penrud. I am as proud in my nature as any man ought to be, but surely as humble as any man can be.

Weazel. Suffer me then to ask you, if there is not a certain lady living, Arabella Woodville by name?

Penrud. Who told you this? how came you thus to strike upon a name, that twenty years of solitude have not effac'd?

Weazel. Because I would prepare you for a task, that with the fortune you inherit must devolve upon you. The interests of this lady, perhaps even her existence, are now in your hands. When I shall deliver the deeds bequeathed to you by your cousin, I shall arm you with the means of extinguishing the wretched Woodville at a blow.

Penrud. What is it you tell me? Have a care how you reverse my nature with a word. Woodville in my power! Woodville at my mercy! If there's a man on earth, that can inspire me with revenge, it is that treacherous, base, deceitful rival. I was in his power, for I loved him—he betrayed me; I was at his mercy, for I trusted him—he destroyed me.

Weazel. Now then you'll own, that money can give something, for it gives revenge.

Penrud. Come on; my mind is made up to this fortune; to the extremest atom I'll exact it all: the

miser's passion seizes on my heart, and money, which I held as dirt, is now my deity.

[*Exeunt into the cottage.*

SCENE II.

Another part of the Forest.

WOODVILLE, *followed by* TRUEMAN.

Wood. Go, go, begone!—Why do you follow me?

True. I pray you, sir, don't dismiss the chaise in this wild place: let it convey you to the next town, and then pursue your journey as you please.

Wood. Don't talk to me, don't trouble me: my journey's at an end.

True. You have been up all night: your mind and body both require some rest.

Wood. What if they do? can you administer to agonies like mine? How dare you thus intrude? By what authority have you, my servant, made yourself a spy upon my actions?

True. By no authority, but that of my affection and good-will: you have been kind to me in your prosperity, ought I to desert you in adversity? Indeed, indeed, sir, I can't leave you here alone.

Wood. Foolish, officious fellow, I perceive you think I have lost my senses: no, I possess them clearly: I know both where I am and what I have to do—had I designs against myself, you could not hinder them; but I have none; 'tis not my own life but yours that is in danger, unless you instantly depart. Look! here is your dismission—I am resolute to be obeyed.

[*Draws a Pistol.*

True. Take my life; fire when you please: I'm not afraid of dying.

Enter SYDENHAM.

Syden. Woodville, what ails you? are you mad? do you fight duels with your own servant?

Wood. Duels!—

Syden. You are right: I see he is not armed. What the devil and all his doings possesses you to point your pistol at a naked man? If you consider him as your equal, give him the fellow to it; if you would punish him as your servant, turn him away.

Wood. But he will not be turn'd away.

True. Not whilst it was my duty to stay by you; now Mr. Sydenham is come, I will intrude no longer. [*Exit.*

Syden. Harry Woodville, are you in your senses, to act in this manner?

Wood. Are you not out of yours, to come thus far to ask me such a question?

Syden. Perhaps I am, but there's no reasoning about friendship; when I see a fellow, whom I love, throw away his happiness, game away his fortune, and then run from the ruin he has made, I have a foolish nature about me, that in spite of all his frenzy will run after him; and though he may break loose from all the world beside, damn me if he shall shake off me, though he had twenty pistols in his reach, and I not one in mine.

Wood. Your friendship, Mr. Sydenham, is not wanted at this moment, and give me leave to say it is unwelcome.

Syden. Very likely; I care little about the welcome that you give me, as I am not quite sure you are the man I was in search of: my friend was a gentleman, though an unwise one; he would hear reason, though he was unapt to follow it; above all things he was not that frantic desperado, as to turn his pistol either against his servant or himself.

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Wood. Well, sir, my pistol is put up—now what have you to say to me?

Syden. I don't know if I shall say any thing to you; certainly nothing to soothe you. It is not because a man has pistols in his pocket, that he is formidable, or that I should flatter him: every fellow, that has not spirit to face misfortune, may be his own assassin; every wretch, who has lost all feelings of humanity, may commit a murder on his fellow creature.

Wood. You are very bitter: what would you have me do?

Syden. Return to your afflicted wife.

Wood. That I can never do; my home is horrible, nor am I in possession of a home; Penruddock's myrmidons are in my house; besides, there's worse than that; my son is come to England; Henry will be upon me, and to meet his gallant injured presence would be worse than death.

Syden. I wish you had reflected on that horror, whilst there was time to have prevented it.—If fathers, whilst their sons are bleeding in their country's battles, will hurl the fatal dice, and stake their fortunes on the cast, alas for their posterity!

Wood. Why urge that dreadful truth? You have no son, you are no gamester.

Syden. No matter, though I never gamed myself, my friends did, and I have lost them: who has more cause to curse his luck than I have?

Wood. Have you now vented all your spleen, and will you leave me?

Syden. I am not sure: tell me what plan you are upon; why are you rambling on this heath?

Wood. I'll tell you that at once—Sir George Penruddock, my chief creditor, is dead; he has bequeathed his fortune to his cousin Roderick of that name. This man inhabits a small tenement here close at hand; a strange sequestered creature, burying him-

self amongst his books, disgusted with the world, and probably a perfect misanthrope—

Syden. I have heard of him; go on.

Wood. This Roderick and I were schoolfellows, studied together at the university, travelled together through most parts of Europe; and were inseparable friends, till by evil chance, we became rivals in love: I obtained Mrs. Woodville's hand, and married her; he was excluded, and renounced society: this man, the bitterest enemy I have, is now the master of my fate.

Syden. Then I conclude those pistols are for him.

Wood. I do not quite say that; he shall have a fair alternative.

Syden. I much doubt if any thing can be fair, when one party has just gained a fortune, and the other lost one: however, if you mean it should be fair, take me with you; whether you shake hands or exchange shots, I will see justice done on both sides: for I will be bold to aver, there never yet was an affair, in which I had the honour to be either principal or second, where equity was not as strictly administered, as if my Lord Chancellor had decreed it from the bench.

Wood. Be it so then, if so it must be: Come with me to this newly-enriched cottager, and if I fail in this last effort, I exact from you an honourable secrecy and an immediate secession. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE III.

PENRUDDOCK'S *Cottage.*

Enter PENRUDDOCK *and* WEAZEL, *from the Cottage.*

Weazel. My good sir, only consider—

Penrud. Leave me, sir.

Weazel. This very circumstance, I say—

Penrud. Return to your papers.

Weazel. Just for one moment, sir.

Penrud. I would be alone, I tell you.

Weazel. O sir, then to be sure—

[*Exit into the Cottage.*

Penrud. This property is immense. Woodville's proud house is mine; now that false friend is punished: all those scenes of gay prosperity, with which he caught the vain weak heart of Arabella, are suddenly reversed, and just retaliation, not less terrible because so tardy, surprises him at last. Farewell, my cottage! scene of my past content, I thank thee: possessing nought but thee, I have not envied palaces; possessed of them, I have forsaken thee; such is man's fickle nature, in solitude a philosopher, wise in adversity, and only patient under injuries, till opportunity occurs to him of revenging them.

Enter WOODVILLE *and* SYDENHAM.

Wood. That's he; the very man.—Sir, let me hope I have happily encountered you; I believe I am addressing myself to Mr. Penruddock.

Penrud. I am Penruddock.

Wood. Perhaps you have lost the recollection of my person?

Penrud. I wish I had—You have left some traces of it in my memory, Mr. Woodville; and nothing can be more opposite to my desires than to revive them.

Wood. That this would be my greeting I expected: for though I ever knew you to be just, yet, in our earliest years, I thought I could discover dawnings of a relentless nature. If twenty years of calm reflection have passed away without assuaging your determined animosity, an opportunity is now before you of hatching that revenge, which you have brooded on so long.

Penrud. Pursue your own reflections, sir, and interrupt not mine. [*Going.*

Syden. Stop, if you please—I am no party in this conference, but as a common friend to every thing that wears the face of man: I can perceive you have been wronged, in time long past, by this gentleman; so have I, recently and deeply wronged; inasmuch as he has abused my friendship, by ruining himself, in defiance of my better counsel—What then? he is sorry for it, and I forgive him: he is in misery, and I pity him.

Penrud. Well, sir, at your remonstrance I will stay; only be pleased to let me know for whose sake I submit myself to Mr. Woodville's conversation.

Syden. I am a very idle fellow, sir; Sydenham my name; one that has thrown away much good will upon his friends, without once practising your happy art of being unmoved by their misfortunes.

Penrud. Humph!—Mr. Woodville will proceed.

Wood. If you, Mr. Penruddock, can find no motive to forgive the wrongs I did you in the matter of my marriage, I shall suggest none, neither will I offer one word in mitigation of those wrongs; they were as great as you believe them; greater, perhaps, than you are perfectly apprized of. In the first glow of your resentment you demanded satisfaction; in justice I must own, that your appeal was warranted, but I was then a happy man, with beauty in my arms, and fortune at my feet, and I evaded it. Now if your heat is not cooled, and you still thirst for revenge, lo! I am ready; I have arms for both, fit to decide our quarrel, and an honourable friend competent to adjust it. [*Produces Pistols.*

Syden. Fairly proposed—if such is your pleasure, gentlemen both, I am perfectly at your disposal.

Penrud. Give me the pistol: [*Takes a Pistol.*] place your man where you like; this is my ground.

Syden. Stop, sir, the forms of honour are not yet complete.—Mr. Woodville, if I rightly understood

you, you have an alternative to propose: if that be so, state it.

Penrud. I have little disposition to bear any trifling.

Wood. Nor I to trifle; therefore no more of it! A woman's mediation can be of no avail: however, Mr. Sydenham, if I fall, give this to the survivor.
[*Presents a pacquet.*

Syden. Hah! Mrs. Woodville's hand!—this must not be rejected: an angel's mediation claims respect, and he must read it, or make his passage through my body ere he shall approach you.—Woodville, disarm yourself——[*Takes his Pistol.*]—Mr. Penruddock, this pacquet is addressed to you; take it; but first, if you please, give me your weapon, as he has done.—Now I maintain an armed neutrality. [*Takes both Pistols.*

[PENRUDDOCK *opens the pacquet, peruses it awhile: while this is passing,* SYDENHAM *speaks as follows:*

Syden. It staggers him—he pauses; yet I perceive no change—[*Exit* PENRUDDOCK *into the Cottage.*]—he flies, however, and we keep the field.—Do you know the purport of that paper?

Wood. I know nothing of its purport but by conjecture: 'twas written by Arabella since she heard of his accession to the fortune of Sir George, and probably contains a strong appeal to his feelings, founded upon past connections; I have reason to believe it chiefly points at my son, who has so long been a prisoner in France, and now at last has got his liberty upon exchange; but I dare say this churl is steeled against humanity.

Syden. I know not what to think of him; that man's soul has no flow! impenetrable frost locks up its current: therefore be prepared.—And now, Harry, if you have any thing upon your mind to encharge me with, avail yourself of the moment, and impart it to me; the issue of these rencontres is uncertain.

Wood. Alas! I have been so improvident a husband, that I dare hardly send my last farewell to my much-injured wife; so unjust a father, that I have scarce presumption to bequeath a blessing to my son. In temporal affairs I am so totally undone, and life is now so perfectly a blank, that he, who takes it from me, takes what I am tired of; and I solemnly conjure my family never to stir the question of my death, nor prosecute the author of it.

[WEAZEL *speaks from the Cottage window.*]

Weazel. Gentlemen, I am commanded by Mr. Penruddock to say, that he declines any further explanation on the business of your visit: you will hear from him again.

Wood. At his own choice and leisure; so inform him.

Syden. Come, Woodville, we have thrown that cynic cur a bone, so let him gnaw it. [*Exeunt.*

ACT THE SECOND.

SCENE I.

A Chamber in TEMPEST'S *House.*

Enter EMILY *and* TEMPEST.

Tempest. Go your ways, vanish out of my sight, for a graceless young hussy—You know I love you, Emily, you know I do, dear as the eyes in my head, better than the heart in my body, and therefore you baffle, and bamboozle, and make a bumpkin of me; that's what you do: you see I am a damn'd fond, forgiving old fool, and you impose upon my good nature.

Emily. No very hard task, I should hope. Only call upon you now and then for a few grains of charitable patience.

Temp. Grains of charitable nonsense, grains of hypocritical impertinence: what business have you to make any calls upon me that you know I can't answer? I have no such thing as patience about me, no such dull mechanical property belonging to me; never had, never will have, never wish to have.

Emily. Well, sir, let it pass then; but you must own it's a little unreasonable to expect that I should abound in that article, of which you, my father, do not possess a single atom?

Temp. Not at all unreasonable, for your mother was a miracle of patience; I am sure I put it very sufficiently to the trial: why, I took her with no other view but as we take a diet-drink in the spring, to sweeten the juices. Tempest, the son of Lord Hurricane, was never born to be calm; 'sblood and fire! I have never been in smooth water since first I was launched upon the surface of the globe. I was a younger son, and kicked into the world without a sixpence; my father gave me no education, taught me nothing, kept me in ignorance, and buffetted me every day for being a dunce.

Emily. That was hard indeed, to give so little and demand so much—but some fathers are quite out of the way of reason.

Temp. That's a wipe at me, I suppose, but no matter—First I was turned into the army, there I got broken bones and empty pockets; then I was banished to the coast of Africa, to govern the savages of Senegambia; there I made a few blunders in colour, by taking whites for blacks, and blacks for whites; but before my enemies could get hold of me, Death laid hands upon them, and I triumphed over their malice by the mortality of the climate.

Emily. Upon my word, sir, you have been tossed and tumbled about in this rough world pretty handsomely.

Temp. Yes, so handsomely, that I will take care you shan't be tossed and tumbled about, till you have a good pilot on board, and a safe harbour under your lee, to lay up in for life.

Emily. That's as much as to say I shall embark with Sir David Daw, and lay up in his fusty old castle on the banks of the Wye, in Monmouthshire, to wit. A precious pilot I shall have, and a famous voyage we shall make of it!—Helm a-weather! cries he, and bear away for the coast of Wales—Helm a-lee! says I, and set all sails for the port of London. He is for steering west, I am for steering east; so between us we run wild out of the track, and make a wreck of ship and cargo in the scuffle for command.

Temp. You talk nonsense, Emily, you gabble without wit or wisdom. Sir David Daw is a very respectable gentleman in his own county.

Emily. Then he is a very silly gentleman for coming out of it.

Temp. He has a noble property; a capital estate.

Emily. Thanks to his ancestors!—he'll never mend it by discovery of the longitude.

Temp. Emily, Emily, do you think I have no eyes? what do you take me for—a mole, a bat, a beetle, not to see where your perverse affections point. You are never out of Mrs. Woodville's house.

Emily. Can that be a wonder, when persecution drives me out of your doors, and pity draws me into her's? Here I am baited by the silliest animal Folly ever lent her name to, there I am recreated by the gentlest being Heaven ever formed.

Temp. Come, come, whilst you are talking thus of the mother, I know to a certainty, it is the son you are thinking of; and positively, Emily, you must banish Henry Woodville from your thoughts.

Emily. Then I must lose the faculty of thinking.

Temp. Don't tell me of your faculties, mine will never consent to marry you to a ruined man.—Sir David is no gamester—

Emily. Perhaps not.

Temp. Nor the son of a gamester.

Emily. No, nor the son of any thing, I should think, that Nature ever owned; for he is so far from being in the likeness of a man, that it would be libeling a monkey to mistake them for each other.

Temp. Hold your tongue. I never said Sir David was a wit.

Emily. No, o' my conscience, a tailor might as well look for custom in the court of Pelew, as you for wit in the empty pericranium of my Monmouthshire lover.

Temp. And if he had wit, what would you do with it? Who would put a naked sword in the hands of a child? I like him the better for his being without it; I have none myself; I had sooner mess with the savages in Africa, than be shut into a room with a company of wits. Your downright stupid fellow is the repose of all society; like a soft cushion in an easy chair, he lulls you into gentle slumbers, and lays all your cares to rest.

Enter SERVANT.

Servant. Sir David Daw— [*Exit* SERVANT.

Temp. Now, now, Emily, behave as you should do, or by the living——

Enter SIR DAVID DAW.

Welcome, Sir David, welcome, my good knight of Monmouth!

Sir D. D. Worthy Governor, I am your devoted servant—Sweet paragon of beauty, I am your humble slave.

Temp. Heyday, my friend, where have you culled these flowers of rhetoric?

Sir D. D. Picked a small posey from Parnassus, to lay it at the feet of the loveliest of the muses.

Emily. Upon my word, Sir David, your periods are the very embrios of poetry; a kind of tadpoles, more than half frogs, and just ready to hop.

Sir D. D. So they can but hop into your good graces, I care not. Come, that's very well; isn't it? He! he!

Temp. Right, my gallant heart, that's the way to treat her—Emily is for ever giggling.

Sir D. D. She is not singular in that: go where I will, they giggle; that is rather daunting, you must think. Amongst our Monmouthshire lasses who but I? Not that I am conscious of more wit than my neighbours, but my jokes always tell; they do so titter when I am in my merry vein, and the servants grin, and the tenants roar, and then my poor dear mother taps me on the cheek, and calls me her dainty David.—Oh! we are so merry in the Castle.

Emily. Aye, to be sure; there's room enough for your wit to escape without running foul of any body's understanding.

Sir D. D. Yes, yes, 'tis a bouncer; and such a hall for battledore and shuttlecock—

Emily. Garnished round with pikes, and gauntlets, and branching horns, the trophies of the family—

Sir D. D. Yes, and in the great parlour such a string of Daws hanging by the wall—

Emily. By the wall?

Sir D. D. Yes, the family pictures.—

Emily. Oh—in ruffs and bands, and picked chins from all antiquity, like the whole court of France in a puppet-show, with Dainty David in the character of Punchinello to close the cavalcade.

Sir D. D. Not so; but in the place of it your own fair portrait, if you please, and under it, in letters of

gold, "Emily, consort of Sir David Daw."—Lilies and roses! what a lovely piece will that be!

Emily. Let it be a family piece then, and we may all have a part in it.

Temp. Aye, aye, that's a hook to haul me in with; I know it is: but let us hear, let us hear what part you have laid out for me.

Emily. An heroic one, be sure; you shall be—let me consider—you shall be drawn in the character of Agamemnon.

Temp. Agamemnon! Why in the character of Agamemnon, I would fain know?

Emily. Because he was a warrior like you, and a governor: but principally because, if I remember his history—he sacrificed his daughter. [*She retires a little.*]

Temp. Heh! how! there I'm thrown out: that is a history I know nothing of.

Sir D. D. Nor I neither.—Ah! my good governor, speak a kind word for me; all my hopes are in you.

Temp. Fear nothing, my man of mettle; keep a stout heart, and there's none of 'em can resist the allurements of your fortune, though they may all be insensible to the beauties of your person.

Emily. [*Advancing.*] No, to be sure; if you make love like an elephant, with your castle on your back, who can stand against you?

Sir D. D. I don't know how it is, Governor Tempest, but though 'tis well known that the first man Nature ever made was a Welshman, and though I flatter myself I am pretty nearly on the same model, yet here every ragged-headed fellow, with a mahogany face, because he can slip into an eel-skin, and I cannot, slips into favour before me; whilst the ladies stare at me, as if I had dropped out of the moon amongst them.

Temp. That is because they lay aside the sight they were born with, and have eyes, like their complexions, of their own making.

Emily. Ah! Sir David, you don't understand them; you are the happiest with the good old lady in the country; your education has been private.

Sir D. D. Quite snug and private; always at home, always with my mother.

Emily. And your amusements—

Sir D. D. Never went abroad for them; we had plenty of pastime amongst ourselves and the servants—cards I never touch: drinking I have no head for: and as for naughty women, I can faithfully assure you, I never come near none of 'em.

Temp. [*Aside to* SIR DAVID DAW.] Keep that to yourself, my friend, if you are wise; for this world is so wicked, that a man is forced to counterfeit vices in order to keep well with it.

Enter SYDENHAM.

Ah! Charles, how wears this wicked world with you?

Syden. Wears apace, frets itself out, grates most confoundedly upon the hinges: I almost think I shall live to see the end of it.—Don't go away, I want to have a word with you. [*Aside to* EMILY.]

Sir D. D. Oh! Mr. Sydenham, I rejoice to see you.

Syden. How fares my venerable Cambro-Briton?

Sir D. D. Terrible ill, for want of you; house, equipage, every thing is at a dead stop, till you set us going.—I called at your lodgings, and they told me you was out of town.

Syden. They did right, I educate my servants in all innocent untruths.

Temp. They gave me the same answer.

Syden. They did wrong; to tell one and the same lie to two several visitors, betrays a poverty of invention.

Emily. And hav'n't you been out of town all this while?

Syden. Hush! hush! ask no questions.—How can I quit the town, with an affair of honour on my hands? didn't you challenge me to a game at chess? and here I am ready to decide it.

Temp. Oh! that dull, dilatory, dreaming game, how I detest it!—Any news, Charles, of the poor Woodvilles?

Syden. That is the very question I was about to ask of you.

Temp. 'Sblood, you are as mysterious as a privy counsellor: they say Woodville is gone off; nay, they circulate a very black and dismal story about him.

Syden. As you have been governor of the blacks, I wish you would put the sooty slaves to death that circulate such stories.

Sir D. D. I hear Sir George Penruddock has made a curious will, and given his whole property to a madman, who has been shut up in a cottage for these twenty years.

Syden. And do you suppose it would have brought him to his senses, if he had lived in a castle?

Temp. Come, come, Sir David; don't you see that cuckoo won't be caught by you? Zooks, man, the thumb-screw would not make him plead; though, let me tell you, when I've been set upon it, I have put tongues as stubborn as his into motion before now. As for Emily, leave her to her drowsy game at chess; for, depend upon it, my friend, that any thing, which tends to stupify her imagination, will be a point gained in your favour.

[*Exeunt* TEMPEST *and* SIR DAVID.

Syden. His Excellency is is in one of his accommodating humours, and gives me an opportunity of telling you, that I have brought Woodville back with me; I knew his point, and overtook him after about twelve miles riding, in the very crisis of his fate.

Emily. Did you so? then here's my hand! for thou art the best soul living; with a heart of gold, and heels of feather, in the service of humanity. Ah! why did cruel Fortune cramp thy powers, when Nature so enriched thee with benevolence?

Syden. Don't complain of Fortune in my case; perhaps the best fortune that can befal me is, that I have nothing to do with her: having little to bestow, I make up for it with good will; had I abundance to give, the good will might be wanting.

Emily. If Fortune, however, would but put you to the trial, I should not tremble for the issue of it. Had Penruddock made you his heir, happy would it have been for poor Woodville.

Syden. For him (to own the truth to you) I have very little compassion; some old habits of good fellowship, perhaps, I can't quite shake off; but a gamester is in nature such a fool, in character so little of a gentleman, and by profession so very close approaching towards a highwayman, that I am ashamed of his acquaintance; yet, for my dear Mrs. Woodville's sake, for my brave Henry's sake, and through them, by implication, for my sweet Emily's, I have sheltered that poor worthless desperado in my lodgings; which is a secret you must keep close and inviolable for all their sakes.

Emily. Doubt me not, for I can well suppose the consequences would be fatal. In one word, is there any hope for him?

Syden. I could not answer that in a thousand words; for I have seen this strange Penruddock, and know not what to make of him.

Emily. Is he a madman, as they report of him?

Syden. That I can't tell; for so many people are mad, who yet have senses enough to conceal it, that he may be so without my discovering it. He is as sullen as a bear, and inveterate against Woodville to the length of any species of revenge.

Emily. This is not the character Mrs. Woodville describes; she conceives better of him.

Syden. I wish she may not be mistaken: we must leave the event to time:—And now, my dear lady, when are we to mount the wedding favours?

Emily. So you will suppose I am cast for transportation to the enchanted castle?

Syden. Enchanted it will be, when you are in it; but how can I suppose, or even wish, any otherwise, when ruin is attached to the alternative?

Emily. You strike upon a motive, that may drive me upon wondrous self-denials. If my beloved Mrs. Woodville falls, if my dear gallant Henry is beaten down and crush'd by poverty and distress, at any sacrifice I'll raise them up.

Syden. Will you? then by the powers of goodness you are an angel!

Emily. But in that wreck of happiness I shall need all the help that friendship can bestow; and you, Charles Sydenham, whom I place ever in the front of those few firm hearts I most prize and most depend on, must not desert me.

Syden. Desert you! Damn it, my throat aches so, and my eyes dazzle, that I can neither rightly speak to you nor see you—but, by the Lord, I'll die for you.

Emily. Not so; but you must come to me in the country: there you and I will tell old stories over a winter's fire, and be as comfortable as two feeling hearts will let us.

Syden. I'll come; I'll come to you—walk, ride, fish, fowl, milk the cows, feed the poultry, nurse the children, laugh, cry, do any thing and every thing you would have me—I will; upon my soul I will!

Emily. Enough said: upon this promise we will part: I shall be call'd for by my father, and you know his humour.

Syden. I know him well for a most absolute and all-to-be-respected governor; but if he had as numerous an offspring as Muley Ishmael, and as large an empire as Timur Khan, the proudest title he could boast would be that of being father to such an angel of a daughter. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE II.

A Street.

PENRUDDOCK *alone.*

Penrud. So! I am in London once more.—From solitude and silence how sudden is the transition to crowded streets, where all without is noise, and all within me anarchy and tumult! Thoughts uncollected, jarring resolutions, avarice, revenge, ambition, all the turbid passions arming, like soldiers roused from sleep, to rush into the battle.

Enter WEAZEL.

Well, sir, is Mrs. Woodville in her house?

Weazel. She is not there, nor any body that can tell me where she is: the servants are dispersed, the chamber-doors all locked and sealed, save one, in which a solitary guard keeps watch, holding possession in due form of law: I have seen it in its splendour; it is now reversed, a melancholy change.

Penrud. I'll visit it nevertheless; it will be a wholesome preparative to the scene of luxury, which you tell me I am to be saluted with in the stately mansion of Sir George Penruddock. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE III.

An unfurnished Room.

Enter WEAZEL, PENRUDDOCK, *and an* OFFICER.

Penrud. You are here, sir, I presume, in office, by authority from the late Sir George Penruddock?

Officer. I am, sir; and though it is against our rules to admit any stranger, yet as I know Mr. Veazel, and he warrants for you, I make no objection to your coming in.

Penrud. Nor to leaving us, I should suppose, within these bare walls; they defy robbery: the scythe of the law cuts close, and those, who follow it, will not be enriched by their gleanings.

Officer. A pleasant gentleman, I should guess; and knows a thing or two.

Weazel. O, nobody better.

Officer. Mr. Veazel, with leave, I'll speak a vord with you.

Weazel. By all means, sir—ever happy to assist, when any thing is wanting in my way. [*Exit, with* OFFICER.

Penrud. Here, then, was the residence of my once-beloved Arabella; here she reigned, here she revelled, and here, perhaps, in a desponding moment, she wrote that melancholy appeal, which wrung the weapon from my hand, when raised against her husband's life. I'll read it once again; the scene conspires, a sympathetic gloom comes over me; and solitude, the friend of meditation, prompts me to review it:—"By the death of Sir George Penruddock, you will find us your debtors in no less a sum than all that we possess; if you are extreme, we are undone; my husband, who expects no mercy, flies from me in despair, and in his fate mine is involved; if then you find an orphan in the world, whose parents could not move your pity, you may think revenge has done enough, and take my Henry into your protection—"

Enter HENRY WOODVILLE.

Henry. Where am I! What has happened? Why is this house so changed in its appearance?

Penrud. Whom do you seek?

Henry. A father and a mother, who dwelt here: If you have heard the name of Woodville, and can ease my anxious terrors, tell me they survive.

Penrud. Be satisfied—They live.

Henry. Devoutly I return Heaven thanks, and bless you for the tidings; long absent, and debarred all correspondence with my family, I came with trembling heart, uncertain of their fate; and, I confess, the ominous appearance of a deserted house struck me with alarm; but I may hope they have some other residence at hand—If you know where, direct me.

Penrud. If I knew where, I would; but—

Henry. But what? Why do you pause?

Penrud. Because I can't proceed.

Henry. Why not proceed? You know they live; can you not tell me where?

Penrud. I cannot.

Henry. What is your business here?

Penrud. None.

Henry. Do you not live in London?

Penrud. No.

Henry. What is your name, occupation? where do you inhabit? How comes it to pass you know so well to answer me one question, and are dumb to all the rest?

Penrud. I am not used to interrogatories, nor quite so patient as may suit with your impetuosity.

Henry. I stand corrected; I am too quick.—You will excuse the feelings of a son.

Penrud. Most willingly; only I'm sorry to perceive they are so sensitive, because this world abounds in misery.

Henry. Now I am sure you know more than you yet reveal; but having said my parents are alive; you fortify me against lesser evils: I know my father's failings, and can well suppose, that his affairs have fallen into decay.

Penrud. To utter ruin. Gaming has undone him.

Henry. Oh! execrable vice, fiend of the human soul, that tears the hearts of parent, child, and friend! What crimes, what shame, what complicated misery hast thou brought upon us! This house was swallowed in the general wreck.

Penrud. With every thing else: Sir George Penruddock had it for a debt, as it is called, of honour.

Henry. A debt of infamy—and may the curse entailed upon such debts descend on him and all that may inherit from him!

Penrud. There you out-run discretion: he is dead, and you would not extend your curse to him that now inherits.

Henry. Light where it will, I'll not revoke it. He, that is Fortune's minion, well deserves it.

Penrud. But he, that's innocent, does not.

Henry. Can he be innocent, who stains his hands with ore drenched in the gamester's blood, dug from the widow's and the orphan's hearts with tears, and cries, and agonies unutterable? 'Tis property accurst: were it a mine as deep as to the centre, I would not touch an atom to preserve myself from starving.

Penrud. You speak too strongly, sir.

Henry. So you may think: I speak as I feel.—Who is the wretched heir?

Penrud. Roderick Penruddock.

Henry. What! Roderick the recluse?

Penrud. The same.

Henry. My father knew him well—a gloomy misanthrope, shunning and shunned by all mankind. When such a being, after long seclusion, lost to all social charities, and hardened into savage insensibility, comes

forth into the world, armed with power and property, he issues like a hungry lion from his den, to ravage and devour.

Penrud. Stop your invective! Know him before you damn him.

Henry. I do not wish to know him; but if you do, and think him wronged by my discourse, convince me of the wrong, and you shall find me ready to atone.

Penrud. I would not have you take his character from me, and yet I think him to be somewhat better than you report of him; however you have put it fairly to the issue, and if your leisure serves to meet me at his house, the late Sir George Penruddock's, within two hours from this, you may perhaps see cause to blush for the severity of your invective: in the mean time, I promise to make no report of what you have said, and neither aggravate his mind against you, nor warn him of your coming.

Henry. If I can find my friends within the time you mention, I will not fail to meet you; but I should know your name.

Penrud. You shall know every thing in proper time and place—till then farewell. [*Exit* HENRY.] Insolent libeller! he has undone himself, and stabbed the mercy in my bosom, whilst in the very act of rising to embrace him.

ACT THE THIRD.

SCENE I.

A mean Apartment in the lodging house of Mrs. WOODVILLE.

HENRY *ushered in by* MARY.

Mary. Walk in, sir, pray walk in. Madam Woodville will be quickly at home.

Henry. Are you her servant?

Mary. I do the work of the house, and wait upon the lodgers.

Henry. Has she none else belonging to her?

Mary. No, no, good lady, she has none else but me. If you are Captain Woodville, her son, I hope it will be in your power to comfort her.

Henry. I am the person; you may leave me.— [*Exit.*

What a sad change is this! My mother in this place—thus lodged, and thus attended! O nature! let me not forget it was a father that did this, else—but that thought is horror——Hark, she is coming——

Enter EMILY TEMPEST.

May I believe my eyes? The lovely phantom of my visions realized.

Emily. The gallant prisoner, we bewailed, set free! This is a joy most welcome. I was informed you called at our house for a direction hither; I can make all allowances for your impatience; but surely, surely, Henry, you made none for mine, when all that you bestowed upon me was a cold inquiry at the door, if such a being still was in existence.

Henry. Chide not, but pity me: the unfortunate are fearful of intruding.

Emily. Say, rather, they are unkind, and wrong their friends, when they suppose them shaken by every breath of fortune.

Henry. The world revolts from poverty.

Emily. Are these the sentiments that you return with? For shame! a soldier to talk thus—Have you seen no misfortunes where you have been, or do you feel them only when they fall upon yourself? Your noble mother does not reason thus.

Henry. Hers are no common evils, I confess; but still adversity is a fair enemy, patience can check it, fortitude can conquer it, religion can convert it to a

blessing. Even I, whom you reprove, bore it without a murmur, for honour was not lost, hope was yet alive—your image, ever present to my mind, brightened captivity, and dreams of future happiness cheered my warm glowing fancy; but now—

Emily. What now? stop there, and let me only dwell upon those objects that delight, although they may delude: joy at the best is fugitive; paint hope in brilliant hues, and it is joy: the picture fades indeed, and its warm tints fly off, but whilst they fly, they charm, and memory feasts upon them, even when they are vanished.

Henry. Oh! well applied, and genuine philosophy. But now, my Emily, what means this mischievous effusion of so much light, that my weak eyes can't bear it? Why all this blaze of beauty?

Emily. Hush! don't be silly; it is no such thing—a little glad to see you, perhaps a little animated by an unexpected pleasure.

Henry. I left you, as I thought, perfect in every charm; but time, I see, still brings fresh tributes to adorn and beautify perfection.—How many hearts have you this moment in your chains?

Emily. Nonsense! not one: the lover I most reckoned upon has just thrown off his chains, and is at liberty.

Henry. Only to yield it up again with double devotion at your feet. Did you know him as I do, you would know, that though impossibilities oppose his hope, reason can make no progress in the reform of his incurable passion.

Emily. Indeed! then what is to be done with such a man? How would you advise me to treat his case?

Henry. With pity, as for one who suffers without prospect of a cure; with caution towards yourself, as holding it unfair to flatter, where you cannot save.

Mrs. Woodville. [*Without.*] Where, where is he?

Enter MRS. WOODVILLE. [EMILY *retires.*

Mrs. W. Henry, my son, my hero! welcome to my arms. [*Embraces him.*

Henry. Oh! my dear mother—suffering, injured excellence! [*Kneels.*

Mrs. W. Stand up! Let me survey you—Why, you credit your campaigning; yet you have fared hardly. There is no gold grows on the soldier's laurels.

Henry. I have a sword, madam, and that will always furnish me a meal.

Mrs. W. Go then, and let it earn for you both food and fame. A British matron sends her warrior to the fight, and scorns to damp his ardour with a tear: I'll share you with my country. Oh! my sweet Emily, my generous friend, I know you can forgive me. [EMILY *advances.*

Emily. Not easily, if you devote a single thought to ceremony: I am here a party upon sufferance, not quite indifferent to the scene before me, but certainly no principal.

Mrs. W. You must be ever such with me; you have shared my sorrows, hard indeed if you might not partake my joys. Well, Henry, we must meet the time, and all its troubles, with what face we can: cowards and fools shrink at the blast of fortune; the solid temper of a noble mind sets them at nought.

Henry. I'll not disgrace your heroism with a murmur; when your instruction points the way to virtue, and the example of my father warns me against vice, how can I stray?

Mrs. W. Alas! your father—he is indeed—but we'll not speak of him: stand firm yourself, and give me cause to love you: for errors of prosperity the world has candour more than enough; now you have nothing left but your good name, of that be jealous in-

the extreme; so shall I be justified for having thought you worthy of that hand, which cruel fortune now irrevocably has snatch'd from you.

Emily. Madam! Mrs. Woodville!—I'll take my leave; your business grows too interesting.—I'll not intrude upon your secrets.

[*Is withdrawing, but stopped by* HENRY.

Henry. Tear not my heart away, but stop, for mercy's sake.

Emily. No, let us part. Your mother speaks the truth; but I was then so happy, I lost sight of it.

Mrs. W. My Emily, my life, my comforter, forgive me! Amidst a throng of sorrows, some unguarded words will evermore escape us; we vent them as we do our sighs, and know not what we say.

Emily. Pray don't apologize; I am quite asham'd of it: 'tis nothing—Only poor Henry made such a face—his eyes set me a crying.

Mrs. W. My dear, my dear! come with me to my chamber. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE II.

A Saloon in the House of Sir GEORGE PENRUDDOCK.

Enter Three UPPER SERVANTS *in mourning—and* WEAZEL, *who addresses them with much ceremony.*

Weazel. Gentlemen of the second table! Chiefs of the lower regions! I am your very humble servant. I condole with you on our general loss: your late worthy master has paid the debt of nature; poor Sir George is no more; but you are serious reflecting men, that weigh these natural events, and know that Death (as the great poet sings) *will come when he will come.*

Jenkins. True, Sir, and all our wonder is he did not come before, seeing what pains Sir George took to quicken him.

Weazel. Aptly remark'd, most worthy Sir; and I am greatly edified to see that you have put yourselves in mourning; 'tis somewhat premature, perhaps, seeing the deceased is not yet interred, but it is a tribute of gratitude to your old master, and an earnest of respect to your new one.

Cook. Of the past we have nothing to complain; of the present we are a little *dubous*.

Weazel. You speak like sage experienced men, well versed in all the dues and perquisites of service. I have my doubts like you; Penruddock, I should fear, may be too much of a philosopher for your purposes, and you perhaps not quite enough for his.

Jenkins. We cannot live without our comforts, Mr. Weazel.

Weazel. And fit it is that you should have them.—You, Mr. Jenkins, I well know, are a man of taste, and have your little gentlemanly recreations—a stable at Epsom, with a bit of blood, that gives you the fresh air upon the Downs; another bit of blood in the commodious purlieus of Marybone, which soothes your softer hours: I doubt if this philosopher's wages would buy body-cloths for either.—In short, my good friends, I much suspect the golden age with all of us is past, the iron coming on.

Jenkins. Well, sir, we shall see: report speaks strangely of the gentleman to be sure. When may we look for his arrival?

Weazel. Momentarily.—I perceive you have a whole battalion of livery servants drawn up in the outer hall.

Jenkins. We thought it for the credit of the establishment to have them all in attendance and full livery.—Does the gentleman bring any of his own domestics with him?

Weazel. Not many.

Jenkins. Let him come as strong as he will, we

have provided; he will find a very handsome dinner, and a well-furnished sideboard.

Weazel. 'Twill be a novelty at least.

Jenkins. We have some very pretty wenches in the house; Sir George was very particular in that way.

Weazel. And you, Mr. Jenkins, are no mean authority; but Mr. Roderick's taste seems to be mostly towards old women of seventy.

Coachman. Pray, sir, with what equipage does he travel hither?

Weazel. With one of nature's providing—Heyday! what's a-coming now.

Enter four LIVERY SERVANTS.

Livery Serv. No offence to you Mr. Weazel, but we would fain know what lay we are to be upon?

Weazel. Lay!

Livery Serv. Yes, lay; and whether the strange gentleman will be agreeable to allow us for bags, canes, and nosegays?

Weazel. Bags you must wear, the graces of your persons claim them; canes you shall have, your merits well bespeak them; and as for nosegays, gentlemen, it is so modest a request, that even the hangman furnishes them to his clients.—But hark, your master is arrived.

Jenkins. Stand by; make way!

Enter PENRUDDOCK; *the Servants all crowd round him, bowing.*

Penrud. Are all these persons of Sir George's household?

Weazel. All of his town establishment.

Penrud. So many for the use of one? they have females in proportion, I should hope, else 'tis a most impolitic establishment.

Weazel. There are plenty of female servants in the

house, but it is not usual for that sex to show themselves in the hall.

Penrud. If there is ever an old woman amongst them, send her to wait upon me.

Weazel. I told you how it would be. [*Aside.*]

Jenkins. Please your honour, there is no such thing in the family.

Penrud. Show me into your library then.

Jenkins. I beg pardon, there is no library.

Penrud. Right! why should wealth be wise? Who, that could feed upon the leavings of the dead, would keep so many living men in pay to pamper his appetite? You would be useless ministers to a philosopher; therefore, whilst I am with you, I'll be none.—Show me your gayest chamber.

Jenkins. This way, sir. Do me the honour to follow me.

Penrud. Do you the honour! Go on. [*Exit attended.*

SCENE III.

A magnificent Ball Room, richly decorated.

Enter SERVANTS, PENRUDDOCK, *and* WEAZEL.

Jenkins. This way, sir, this way.

Penrud. What's all this? for what perverted race of beings was this abominable farrago of absurdity collected?

Jenkins. This, sir! we call this the ball room.

Penrud. The ball room!

Jenkins. Yes. It was thus prepared for the *fête* Sir George intended to have given on his return out of Cornwall, as this very night, if death had not prevented him.

Penrud. Death saved his credit; and as guardian of his memory, I will have this libel burnt by the common hangman, and its author prosecuted with the utmost rigour of the law.

Jenkins. We have other apartments, sir, if this is not to your liking.

Penrud. Leave me, leave me. [*Exit* JENKINS *and* SERVANTS.]—Oh! my beloved cottage, when shall I re-visit thee?—Oh, Mr. Weazel—come here—come here, I say; why don't you come here? I told you of my adventure with young Woodville, and the hard names he gave me: would it not be a worthy punishment to imprison him for life?

Weazel. A moderate correction he well merits; but imprisonment for life would be too severe a punishment.

Penrud. I think it would, in such an execrable dungeon as this.—How long, sir, might it take to starve a naked man to death in a cold frosty night?

Weazel. Truly, sir, the calculation never entered my thoughts.

Penrud. I'll tell you then—about as long as it would take to drive me mad, were I to be here shut up, without the power of an escape. 'Sdeath! can a man, that has looked Nature in the face, gaze on these fripperies? Why, sir, my cobwebs, which old Deborah's purblind eyes leave undisturbed, have twenty times the grace of these unnatural festoons. What did Sir George Penruddock mean by thus lampooning me? I'll not wear a fool's cap and bells for any man's humour, not I.—Sir, I must ever curse the moment when you broke up my repose in my small unsophisticated cottage.

Enter JENKINS.

Jenkins. Captain Woodville is at the door, and desires to know—

Penrud. Introduce Captain Woodville directly.— [*Exit* JENKINS.

Mr. Weazel, you will expedite those matters I instructed you upon, and remember secrecy.

Weazel. I shall act faithfully in all things, to the best of my understanding.

Penrud. Well, do it; and don't chatter.

Weazel. What a mysterious animal it is! 'Twould puzzle Oedipus to unriddle what he means. [*Exit.*

Enter HENRY.

Henry. Bless me! can this be so? Am I in company with Mr. Penruddock?

Penrud. For the second time, sir.—I recollect we met by accident, and had some interesting conversation.

Henry. Then I must throw myself upon your candour, and abide by any measures you may chuse to dictate, in consequence of what has passed between us.

Penrud. You can hardly expect much candour in a character, such as you painted—savage, insensible, lost to all social charities, a gloomy misanthrope.

Henry. I spoke, as men are apt to speak, what I believed upon report.—If you mean only to retort the words on me as their retailer, you still leave the original authority in force; but if you can refute that, you at once vindicate your own character from aspersion, and bring me to shame for my credulity and levity.

Penrud. If I remember right, you quoted your own father as the authority, on which you rested: very well—of him, then, in the first place, I will speak; of myself in the last.—[*Puts chairs.*] Sit down.—[*They sit.*] Your father and myself were intimates through all that happy age, when Nature wears no mask: our boyish sports, our college studies, our travelling excursions, united us in friendship.—This may be tedious talk; and yet I study to be brief, for my own sake as well as yours.

Henry. I'm all attention—pray proceed.

Penrud. On our return from travel, it was my fortune to engage the affections of a lady—whom, at this distant period, I cannot name without emotions that unman and shake my foolish heart—therefore no

more of her. Your father was our mutual confidant, passed and repassed between us on affairs of trust and secrecy, while I was busied in providing for our marriage settlement: I struggled against difficulties that tortured my impatience, and at length overcame them. In that interval a villain had traduced my character, poisoned her credulous mind, and by the display of a superior fortune, prevailed upon her parents to revoke their promises to me, and marry her to him.—What did this wretch deserve?

Henry. Death from your hands, and infamy from all the world.

Penrud. And yet upon his credit you arraign my character;—for that wretch [*Rises.*]—is your own father.

Henry. I am dumb with horror. [*Rises.*

Penrud. Now can you wonder, if, when armed with power to extinguish this despoiler of my peace, this still inveterate defamer of my character, I issue, as your own words describe me, like a hungry lion from his den, to ravage and devour?

Henry. I'll answer that hereafter; and by the honour of a soldier, I will answer it as truth and justice shall exact of me. But a charge so strong, so serious, so heart-rending to a son, who feels himself referred to in a case so touching, demands a strict discussion: I shall immediately seek out my father, whom I have not yet seen.

Penrud. If I accuse him falsely, it is not restitution of the debt he owes me, nor all that I possess besides, no, nor my life itself, that can atone for the calumny. If I have spoken truth, confess, that though I have the fury of the lion you compare me to, I have, like him, instinct to justify the ravages I make.

Henry. I close upon those terms: when next we meet, we meet decisively. [*Exit* HENRY.

Penrud. He, that is once deceived, may plead a venial error; but he, that gives himself to be a fool

twice duped, has nothing but his folly to excuse him. I parted from this strumpet world, because she jilted me; protesting never to believe her more, I cast her off; she now approaches me with syren smiles, throws out her lures, and thinks to dazzle me with these vile scraps of tawdry patch-work finery.—Away with all such snares! there's whore upon the face of them.

Enter JENKINS.

Jenkins. Is it your pleasure to be at home, sir?

Penrud. It shall be before long.

Jenkins. Do you chuse to see Mr. Sydenham?

Penrud. By all means.—The whole town are welcome to break in, and plunder all they find:—

[*Exit* JENKINS.

Encumbered with the trappings of folly, the sooner I am stripped the better.

Enter SYDENHAM.

Sir, I am proud to see you. This is indeed a kindness greater than I looked for, even from you, of whom I had conceived so highly, to visit one that must appear to you in the last stage of human misery.

Syden. How so, sir? what is it you can allude to?

Penrud. These symptoms of insanity.

Syden. You surprise me, sir: if you advert to the decorations of this ball-room, be assured they are executed to a miracle; conceived, disposed, and finished with great elegance, and in the very last taste.

Penrud. Heaven grant it may be the last!

Syden. You have lived long out of the world; your eyes are used to Nature; but in these times we never prize what we can enjoy for nothing; of course Nature and all her works are out of fashion.

Penrud. And pray, sir, may I ask what fashion you are of?

Syden. Sir, I am, as I told you, a mere idler, a roving drone without a hive. To call upon me for an opinion, is to expose me to danger, for I am too honest to disguise my sentiments, and my sentiments are too sincere to please the generality of those I keep company with—I am poor, but still such a plain-spoken fool, that if you were to ask me what I thought of you, I should infallibly give you my opinion to your face.

Penrud. Then give it, I conjure you: I have still my own conscience to refer to.

Syden. Perhaps I may not treat you with the civility you require. Your conscience and I may differ in that respect.

Penrud. Proceed nevertheless.

Syden. The first predicament I saw you in was a peculiar one—Encountered by a man, a guilty one I own, who confessed to the wrongs he had done you, and threw himself upon your pardon: he was in misery, and at your mercy—a glorious moment was then in your reach; for the honour of human nature I wished you to have seized it; you seized the pistol, instead, which he tendered you, and when you might have conquered him by generosity, preferred the doubtful chance of revenging yourself in his blood.

Penrud. Go on, go on! Cut deep, and never spare me.

Syden. A mediating angel stopped your hand, but still you slunk away in silence, sullen and mysterious: what the contents of Mrs. Woodville's letter were, I know not; but whatever they might be, I understand they are unanswered, for I came this instant from the lady, who addressed you—Here you are not less wanting in politeness than humanity.

Penrud. Facts, facts,—no comments, if you please. What next?

Syden. The son of your neglected correspondent is come home; a braver, nobler, more ingenuous youth, his country does not boast: I met him as he parted from your door; what was in his heart, I know not, but in his features all was sadness, horror, and despair—I threw my arms about him; he pressed me to his bosom, sighed, and broke away from me without a word.

Penrud. If you held no discourse with him, how could you dive into his thoughts?

Syden. Because I know how deep and keen the pangs of disappointed love.

Penrud. Do you know that? I know it too: tell me his case; what is the lady's name, and whence his disappointment?

Syden. The mistress of his soul is Emily, the fair and lovely daughter of your neighbour Mr. Tempest: plunged in his father's ruin, all his hopes are wrecked; honour forbids the match, for Tempest is not rich, and Henry (curse upon that demon gaming!) is undone: meantime Sir David Daw, a fellow crammed with money to a surfeit, proposes for the lady—

Penrud. What then, what then? she will not marry him?

Syden. I should suppose she will.

Penrud. Infamous prostitution! Is there a second woman to be found so base of soul, so lost to every sense—

Syden. Stop! on your life no more: I must not hear the noblest sacrifice, that generosity ever made to save a sinking family, so grossly treated by the very man, who is himself the source and fountain-head of their calamity—And now proceed, fulfil your whole design, complete their ruin—tear this devoted victim from the heart of her beloved Henry—drive her into the arms of folly—immolate affection, beauty, innocence, every grace, and every virtue, to the luxury of revenge, and when you have

done it—fall to your dinner with what appetite you may!

Penrud. Stay, sir!—I could reply to you, but my heart swells against this tyranny of tongue. The time may come—nay, it shall come—when you'll repent this language.

Syden. Not I, by Heaven—I have a sword, that never yet was backward to come forth upon the call, and second what I have said. And now, because I'll give your vengeance its full range, and suffer none that I call friend to skulk behind my shield, I tell you Woodville will be found with me, whenever you think fit to seek him. Your servants know the house, and and will direct you to it. [*Exit.*

Penrud. Here's a bold spirit! These are the loud-tongued moralists, who make benevolence a bully, and mouth us into mercy by the dint of noise and impudence—but I shall lower his tone.—Who waits?—Tell my Attorney I would speak with him. [*Exit.*

ACT THE FOURTH.

SCENE I.

An Apartment in SYDENHAM'S *House.*

WOODVILLE, MRS. WOODVILLE.

Wood. You strive in vain to comfort me; my spirit sinks under a load of guilt, which all your pity and forgiveness cannot lighten.—Is there a gleam of hope to catch at?

Mrs. W. There seems an awful pause in our fate; I dare not call it hope; I do not think it warrants us to treat it as despair.

Wood. Have you had any answer from Penruddock?

Mrs. W. None.

Wood. Heartless, unfeeling monster—

Mrs. W. Hush, hush! you should not rail.

Wood. I'll hide myself no longer; I'll go forth and face his persecution.

Mrs. W. Hold, be not rash. Where's Sydenham?

Wood. Gone to Penruddock.

Mrs. W. I'm sorry for it; that will blow the flame; their tempers never can accord.

Wood. I saw the danger, and strove to divert him from the undertaking—but you know his zealous temper; no remonstrance stops him.

Mrs. W. I'll go to Penruddock myself.

Wood. Not for the world.

Mrs. W. Why, what should hinder me?

Wood. Consideration for yourself—and, though I have justly forfeited all right to counsel you, let me add, my earnest dissuasion.

Mrs. W. This is no time for pride—think of your son!

Wood. Oh! agony of soul! Oh, monstrous, monstrous villain that I am!—And look! protect me, save me from the sight of him. [*Falls on her neck.*

Enter HENRY.

Henry. Sir, be a man! You fly too late to that protecting virtue; if it is painful to abide this meeting, why did you risk the pain? What was the good you might have gained, compared with what you have lost?—A wife, a son, the sacred trust of husband, father, all that Heaven committed to your keeping, staked (Oh! disproportioned stake!) against a gambler's coin!

Wood. Truly, but sternly urged.—I thank you! It has roused me.

Henry. I'm glad it has, for it requires some energy

to meet the appeal that I am bound to make: Penruddock charges you with acts, long past indeed, but of the blackest treachery. How stands the truth? I'm deeply pledged upon the issue of your answer: I you are falsely charged, I shall do what becomes me as your son; if not, I've done him wrong, and have much to atone for.

Wood. I'll give no answer: I am your father, sir, and will not be thus questioned.

Henry. Alas! you are my father; and my honour, which is all you have not taken from me, is so far engaged that I must have an answer.

Mrs. W. Take it from me!—'Tis true.

Wood. Hah! do you turn against me?

Mrs. W. No; but I cannot turn aside from truth, and shrink as you do from confession, when a brave son demands it.—Penruddock has been wronged.

Wood. I have cancelled all his wrongs; I have tendered him the satisfaction of a gentleman, and he accepted it; Sydenham was present, and can witness it.

Mrs. W. And what ensued!

Wood. Your letter was produced, and he declined the duel.

Mrs. W. Did he? Now Heaven be thanked! I have saved your heart one agony at least—What would have been your crime, had you destroyed that man!

Wood. Perhaps I did not mean to put it to the risk.

Henry. I hope you did not,—I have now my answer, and must take my leave.

Enter SYDENHAM *and stops him.*

Syden. One moment, one short moment, my dear lad!—For ever on the wing?—I must shoot flying then; for come what may, I must and will embrace you.

Henry. Measure not my affection, my good friend, by the few moments it can spare you: you have the soul of honour in you, know all its feelings, its refinements, and can trust, that nothing but its duties would compel me to break from you thus abruptly—farewell! [*Exit.*

Syden. There, there he goes—unfortunate, though brave, the darling of my heart, his country's gallant champion, redeemed from long captivity to encounter sorrows at home, enough to rend his manly heart asunder—Who would not pity him? who but must love him? I do from my soul.

Mrs. W. Aye, Charles, you have a heart.

Syden. I have a heart to honour him, a sword to serve him, and a purse—no, not that—confound it, curse it for its emptiness!—hang dog, I would it were as big and as full as a sack, for his sake—Damn that old crabbed cottager, that book-worm—

Mrs. W. Peace!—you have visited Penruddock—

Syden. Yes, you may call it visiting. He received me, planting himself in the very centre of Sir George's splendid ball-room, like a gloomy night-piece in a gilded frame. He asked me if I did not think him mad—I civily said, no; which was a lie for your sake;—but presently he led me on to give him his full character, and then the truth came out; I told him my whole mind.

Wood. What did you tell him? can you recollect?

Syden. As for you, I told him fairly I had nothing to say in your behalf, but that I thought it would have been a very gallant act to have forgiven you, simply because you had so little title to expect it.

Wood. There was no great flattery in that, methinks.

Syden. Hang it, flattery! no; I was past flattering; for when I came to speak of Henry, and how all hopes of his beloved Emily were blasted by your cursed itch

of gaming, 'sdeath! I was all on fire, and shot philippics thick and terrible as red-hot balls.

Mrs. W. Why? what provok'd you to it?

Syden. What but to think how glorious an opportunity he let slip of rescuing the brave lad from disappointment, and defeating that rich blockhead of a baronet, that dunder-headed Daw, who waits to snap her up? wasn't that enough to do it! Zooks! had I swallowed Hecla, I could not have fumed more furiously.

Mrs. W. Still you do not answer to my question: Did Mr. Penruddock give you to understand, that Henry had nothing to expect from him?

Syden. No; but I understood it well enough without his giving—I saw it in his looks; if you would paint a head of Caius Marius in his prison, he was the very model for it: It chilled benevolence to look upon him; Spitzbergen could not freeze me more effectually than his marble face.

Mrs. W. My friend, my friend! you are too volatile; you only saw the ruggedness of the soil, and never searched for the rich ore beneath it.—And now, Woodville, for a short time farewell! To your benevolent friend I recommend you; and, if my auguries don't deceive me, I'll bring you better tidings when next we meet. [*Exit.*

Syden. By Heavens, Woodville, you must have had a most intolerable bad taste, when you could prefer the company of a crew of gamesters to the society of that angelic woman.

Wood. Oh! Sydenham, I reflect with horror on that monster gaming: that with the smiles of a syren to allure, has the talons of a harpy to destroy us.

[*Exeunt.*

SCENE II.

An Apartment in PENRUDDOCK'S *House.*

PENRUDDOCK *alone.*

Penrud. I am weary, sick, discomfited. This world and I must part once more. That it has virtues, I will not deny; but they lie buried in a tide of vanities, like grains of gold in sand washed down by mountain torrents: I cannot wait the sifting.

Enter HENRY.

Henry. They tell me you would see me; if I come unseasonably, appoint some other time.

Penrud. The present is your own: command it as you please.

Henry. I have done you flagrant wrong; but as I cannot charge my memory with slandering your good name in any other person's hearing but your own, and that unknowingly, I have no other person to atone to but yourself.

Penrud. You have seen your father, and explained?

Henry. I have; my mother too was present.

Penrud. Your mother present!—May I request you to describe what passed?

Henry. You shall know all.—My father at first sight shrunk from me, conscious and abashed; I urged your charge upon him strongly, perhaps (for I was galled with many griefs) more strongly than became me: my high tone offended him, and he refused to answer; a second time I urged the same demand; my mother instantly replied, that your appeal was true—you had been grossly wronged.—Her candour drew forth his confession, qualified with this excuse, that he had tendered satisfaction; hinting withal, that had the affair taken place, he would not have returned your fire.

Penrud. It is enough, I am satisfied; you know me now to have been an injured man, betrayed by him I trusted, wounded in the tenderest part, and robbed of all I held most dear: if, therefore, I am become *savage, insensible*, and all that you once thought me, I have some natural plea; and, should you find me a hard creditor to one that was so false a friend, what can you say?

Henry. Less than I wish: your own benevolence must be my father's advocate.

Penrud. He has undone his family, lost great sums by play, and chiefly, as I find, to Sir George Penruddock, who supplied him also with loans till his estate was mortgaged to its value, his town-house seized, and bond debts hanging over him, that put his person at my mercy—If revenge were my object, these are tempting opportunities for indulging it; if avarice were my passion, here are ample means for gratifying it—What have you now to offer on your father's part?

Henry. To justice, nothing; some little plea, perhaps, upon the score of mercy.

Penrud. State it.

Henry. I am a soldier, sir; and, were I circumstanced as you are, I could not suffer myself to deprive that man of his liberty, who had tendered me an honourable satisfaction at the peril of his life.

Penrud. Well, sir, I love a soldier; and though your arguments are not to be found in law or gospel, yet they have weight, and I will give them full consideration: we shall meet again.

Henry. Have you any further commands?

Penrud. A word before we part—You bear a strong resemblance to your mother—will you be troubled with a message to her?

Henry. Most readily.

Penrud. I have to apologize for the neglect of an unanswered letter—Say to her, I beseech you, that I

am collecting spirits to request an interview with her, before I finally retire to my cottage.—This to your mother—now to yourself a word in secrecy and pure good-will—I am told you are attached to a most amiable young lady, daughter of the Honourable Mr. Tempest, my near neighbour—by sad experience I exhort you, trust not to chance and time; make suit without delay, lose not a moment, but repair forthwith to Mr. Tempest.

Henry. Ah! sir, what hope for me?

Penrud. A soldier, and despair? For shame! go, go, announce yourself, and take your chance for a reception: if he admits you, well; if he declines your visit, you have lost your labour, and I have given you mistaken counsel. Come, I'll attend you to the door. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE III.

Mr. TEMPEST'S *House.—Tables and Chairs.*

TEMPEST, SIR DAVID DAW.

Sir D. D. With your leave, Governor Tempest, I would fain crave your patience, whilst I open a bit of my mind to you, in a quiet way, and without offence.

Temp. You may open it too without a preface, good Sir David; I am ready to hear you.

Sir D. D. That's kind; that's courteous! and I must say it to your face, aye, and I will say it in the face of the whole world, that I have always found you as obliging and civil-spoken a gentleman, as I ever crossed upon in my whole life before—I speak it from my heart, I do indeed, I speak the truth, and nothing but the truth.

Temp. Yes, but I don't want to hear it just now; speak to the business, and leave truth to speak for itself.

Sir D. D. But why do I say it? Why, but because

I hear the people talk so much of your want of temper, and of the violent passions you throw yourself into? Now I say—

Temp. Who cares what you say? The people are not half so provoking as you, the retail hawker of their paltry nonsense—you, that with silly acquiescence make men sick of their own opinions by always chiming in with them—you, that pelt us with ill-favoured compliments, till rotten eggs and the pillory would be a recreation in comparison of them—you that—

Sir D. D. Oh dear, oh dear! who could have thought it? now you have driven all I had to say clear out of my head.

Temp. Well, 'tis no loss, if this is a sample of it's contents.

Sir D. D. I cannot for the soul of me get the words together again; though I had conned them over pretty closely, if you had not bounced upon me in such a fashion; but, under favour, I could explain myself to your fair daughter, she is kindly and good-humoured.

Temp. Make your own way with her then as you can, for here she comes.

Enter EMILY.

Well, child, if you can make any thing of this gentleman, it is more than I can; all I understand is, that he has been flattering my patience till he has put me in a passion.

Emily. O fie, Sir David! do not you know you should never speak of patience in my father's company? 'Tis like complimenting a man upon his wife, after he is divorced from her.

Temp. Hussy, is your wit so unmanageable, that it runs foul of your father?—Hark'ye, child, a word in your ear—

Emily. Nothing else, I hope—but, indeed, sir, I am half afraid of you.

Temp. And well you may, you little slut, for you deserve—I'll tell you what you deserve—a better husband than this David Dunce.—Mind now! (but this is a secret) I don't quite insist upon your liking him as well as Harry Woodville.

Emily. No, sir, that would be to debar me from the use of eyes, ears, and understanding.

Temp. And hark'ye!—If you give him a smooth answer, and a civil passport into Monmouthshire, I am not sure, provided you are very penitent, and beg hard, but I shall find in my heart to forgive you. You understand me. [*Exit.*

Sir D. D. O Jubilate! I'm glad to my heart he is gone. Never did I hear such a roysterer in my days. What! does he take me for one of his black negro slaves in Africa? Have not I danced attendance long enough upon his humours, followed him like his shadow, laughed at his jokes, echoed his opinions, put up with his swearing, and been as mute as a fish whilst he rated at the servants? and now to fall upon me like a cat o'mountain on a harmless kid—Oh! if it was not for you, Miss Emily, if my love for you did not keep me cool and calm, I would show him a little of thespirit of the Daws: I should be as hot and snappish as himself—but you don't listen to me, I'm afraid.

Emily. What can this whisper mean? He has had a stranger with him—a coarse, clownish man—but that can argue nothing—Henry he has not seen—

Sir D. D. Will you not let me speak to you?

Emily. Oh! yes, for ever; [EMILY *brings a chair forward*—SIR DAVID *sits down in it.*—*She stares at him; he recollects himself, rises, and brings forward another*—*then brings the table, which he overturns. Having raised it, they sit.*] Now you may talk without stint or measure; only let me meditate the whilst;

my thoughts won't interrupt you, nor your discourse my thoughts.

Sir D. D. I should hope, lovely charmer—

Emily. Lovely what?

Sir D. D. Lovely charmer was my expression.

Emily. Oh, very well: it's all the same. Go on.

Sir D. D. I should hope, lovely Miss Emily Tempest, (for I won't say charmer) after the long attendance I have paid, and the proofs I have given of my patience, as well as of my passion, that I have now waited the full time that young ladies usually require to make up their minds, whether to say Aye or No to a plain proposal.

Emily. What proposal do you allude to?

Sir D. D. Surely you can't ask that question seriously at this time o'day; surely you must know, that I mean a proposal of marriage!

Emily. Right! very true—I recollect you proposed to marry me—Well! what would you do with me when you had got me?

Sir D. D. Lud-a-mercy! well; what would I do with you? That's comical, i'faith—why, in the first place, I'd whisk you down to the castle—

Emily. Whisk me down to the castle—

Sir D. D. To be sure I would, for why? things are all at sixes and sevens for want of me: nothing like a master's eye; a gentleman, who trusts to servants in his absence, is sure to be cut up.

Emily. Cut up! what's that?

Sir D. D. Why, 'tis a common phrase.

Emily. Indeed! Well, what am I to be done with then?

Sir D. D. Oh; as for that we shall soon set things upon their right bottom again, and then we will be as happy and as merry as the day is long.

Emily. Hold there! I never bargained to be happy.

Sir D. D. Why, what should hinder you, when

every thing, that money can command, shall be purchased to content you? But I'm afraid, Miss Emily, there is a little double-dealing in this business: I suspect your heart inclines to Captain Woodville; and now he is come to England, I suppose I am likely to be cut out.

Emily. Poor man! what between cutting up and cutting out, how you will be mangled? Would not it be better to live single in a whole skin, than marry and be butchered in so barbarous a manner?

[*They rise.*

Sir D. D. I don't know but it might—I won't say but it may be so—if I'm not agreeable to one, I may be agreeable to another—rich folks need not go a-begging.—If Captain Woodville is the man, why then perhaps I don't covet to be the master—if Captain Woodville—Hush! who's coming?

Enter HENRY WOODVILLE.

Emily. Henry!

Sir D. D. Oh Lord! my death warrant. [*Aside.*

Henry. Well may you be surprised to see me here, and your wonder will be increased when I tell you, that I have your father's privilege for my intrusion;—but if you and this gentleman, whom I understand to be Sir David Daw—

Sir D. D. Yes, sir, I am Sir David Daw.

Henry.—Are upon business of consequence, I retire upon the word.

Sir D. D. A very civil person, I must say.

Emily. Sir David, was the business we were upon of any consequence?

Sir D. D. To me of most immediate; how did you consider it, I pray?

Emily. As I do every other harmless common talk; very entertaining whilst it lasts, very soon forgot when it is over; but this gentleman has conversation of a

sort that is apt to drive all other out of my recollection.

Henry. Oh! Emily, Emily! for Heaven's sake—

Emily. Hold your tongue.

Sir D. D. Nay, madam, the gentleman seems to understand himself very properly; but I must think that you, Miss Emily, considering who I am, and how I came here, do not understand me quite so properly; and I must say—

Henry. What must you say? Not a single word to this lady that in the slightest degree borders on disrespect; and now, with that caution for your government, let me hear what it is you must say—

Sir D. D. Nay, nothing more; I think I've said enough—Your very humble servant. [*Exit.*

Henry. This absolute repulse of your rich suitor flatters but frightens me. What will your father say? whilst I am wholly in the fault, you will bear all the blame.

Emily. If I am never blamed but for your faults—
" Why let the stricken deer go weep,
" The hart ungalled play."

Henry. Can you account for his indulgence?

Emily. Can you expound the changes of the moon? Can you explain why, when all other female hearts are fickle, mine alone is fixed?

Henry, Ought I to suffer that? honour should teach me to avoid your presence.

Emily. Yes; but if you practise that honour upon me, I never will forgive you. Come down from these high flights, if you please, and walk upon your feet, as other men do. If you are alarmed at being poor, I'll marry that money-bag, and enrich you with the pillage of it—will that be honourable? No, no! most execrable meanness; therefore away with it! Spinster as I am, I may struggle on to a good old age, and give offence to nobody; but a wife, without

bestow upon her husband, is a cheat and an r.

ry. Oh! cruel, cruel fortune, why was it my be the son of a gamester?

Emily. Rather say why was it not my lot to be the ress of Penruddock, instead of that old fusty philosopher, who, when he and the spiders have stood centinels over his coffers, till watching and fasting have worn him to a skeleton, will sink into the grave, and leave his wealth to be bestowed in premiums for discoveries in the moon.

Henry. Come, come, take care how you fall into the same trap as I did: We must suspend opinions of Penruddock.

Emily. Must we? Nay, now I swear there is something in your thoughts; aye, and my father too looks wise, and whispers: well, if you have a secret, and won't tell it me, be it at your peril! I'll keep mine as close as you keep yours.

Henry. I'll compromise with you, and exchange confessions.—Answer me this,—if fortune should turn round and smile upon your poor disconsolate admirer, will you, who sway each movement of my heart, inspire its hopes, allay its fears, animate its ambition, and engross its love!—Will you, oh, Emily—

Emily. Will I do what?

Henry. I dare not ask the question—it is presumptuous, base, dishonourable—

Emily. And very disappointing, let me tell you, to one whose answer was so ready.—Henceforth I've done with you; I shall now retreat into the citadel, and stand upon my defences; when you want another parley, you must treat with the Governor. [*Exeunt.*

ACT THE FIFTH.

SCENE I.

A Chamber in SIR GEORGE PENRUDDOCK'S—*Table and chairs.*

PENRUDDOCK *and* WEAZEL *sitting at the table.*

Penrud. Thus then it stands—This house, and all that its voluptuous owner had amassed within it, we doom to instant sale; some modern Lucullus will be found to purchase it; the mourners in black, and the mountebanks in their parti-coloured jackets, must be paid their wages, and dismissed—So far we are agreed.

Weazel. Perfectly, sir; and if any young heir is in haste to be rid of his estate, these are the gentlemen that will soonest help him to the end of it.

Penrud. Mrs. Woodville's settlement, which in her husband's desperate necessity she had as desperately resigned to him, is now made over, and secured in trust to her sole use and benefit.

Weazel. The deed is now in hand, and a deed it is, permit me to say, that will make your fame resound to all posterity.

Penrud. Thank Heaven, I shall not hear it! The fame I covet blows no trumpet in my ears; it whispers peace and comfort to my heart. The obligations, bonds, and mortgages, of whatever description, covering the whole of Woodville's property, are now consigned to Henry his son.

Weazel. They are, and give him clear possession of his paternal estate.

Penrud. 'Tis what I mean, and also of the house in town.

Weazel. They are effectual to both purposes; and

...w you will, good sir, I must and will pro... a most noble benefaction.

...d. [*Rises.*] In this particular I'll not decline ...praise; for doing this I've struggled hard against ...evil spirit that had seized dominion of my heart, ...d triumphed over my benevolence—this conquest I may glory in.

Weazel. There yet remains, of solid and original estate, possessions to a great amount.

Penrud. Them I shall husband as untainted stock: I do not cut into the heart of the tree, I only lop off the excrescences and funguses, that weakened and disgraced it. Now, sir, if these points are clearly understood by you, and no difficulties occur that require explanation, we will separate, with your leave, you to Mr. Tempest and I to my own occupations.

Weazel. Your pardon for one moment—My profession is the law: it has been my lot to execute many honourable and benevolent commissions; some, I confess, have fallen into my hands, that have put my conscience to a little strain, though a man of my sort must not start at trifles; but the instructions you have now honoured me with exceed all I have ever handled, all I have heard of; and when this charitable deed shall come to be registered in the upper court, I hope my name as witness will go along with it; and if the joy with which I signed it be remembered in my favour, I fancy few attornies will stand a better chance than your humble servant Timothy Weazel. [*Exit* WEAZEL.

Penrud. 'Tis done! the last bad passion in my breast is now expelled, and it no longer rankles with revenge: in the retirement of my cottage I shall have something in store, on which my thoughts may feed with pleasing retrospection; courted by affluence, I resort to solitude by choice, not fly to it for refuge from misfortune and disgust. Now I can say, as I contemplate Nature's bold and frowning face—" Knit

not your brows at me; I've done the world ... —Or if I turn the moral page, conscious o... triumphed in my turn, I can reply to Plato, ... am a philosopher."

Enter JENKINS.

Jenkins. Mrs. Woodville desires—

Penrud. What? Who?

Jenkins. Mrs. Woodville, sir, desires leave to wait on you.

Penrud. Admit the lady.—What do you stand—

[*Exit* JENKINS.

Where is my boasted courage? Oh! that this task was over!

Enter MRS. WOODVILLE.

Your servant, madam.—

Mrs. W. If you are not as totally reversed in nature as you are raised in fortune, I shall not repent of having hazarded a step so humbling to my sex, so agonizing to my feelings; for I am sure it was not in your heart, when I partook of it, to treat a guiltless woman with contempt, or wreak unmanly vengeance on your worst of enemies, when fallen at your feet. Ah, sir! you are greatly agitated. Let me retire; I cannot bear to hurt you.

Penrud. Pray do not leave me: Did you know what struggles I have surmounted, you would say I perform wonders. I could not write to you, judge what it is to see you.

Mrs. W. I thought that these emotions had subsided, and that solitude and study had made you a philosopher.

Penrud. Ah, madam, you see what a philosopher I am. Arabella, you never knew me rightly; I had a heart for friendship and love; I was betrayed by one, and ruined in the other.

Mrs. W. You have been deeply injured, I must

own: I too have been to blame, but I was young and credulous, and caught with glittering snares.

Penrud. Aye, snares they have been; fatal ones, alas!

Mrs. W. I have lived in dissipation, you in calm retirement; how peacefully your hours have passed, how unquietly mine! One only solace cheered my sad heart—my Henry, my son.

Penrud. I have seen him; I have conversed with him: he spoke unguardedly—but disappointment sours the mind; he treated me unjustly—but he resembled you, and I forgave him.

Mrs. W. If you are thus retentive of affection, I must suppose you are no less so of resentment; why then should I repeat my sorrows? You know them.

Penrud. I know them; I have felt them; I have redressed them.

Mrs. W. Redressed them! What is it I hear?

Penrud. What I have done, I have done; I cannot talk of benefits——

Mrs. W. Oh, sir——

Penrud. Nor will I hear acknowledgments. You ould have sunk—I could not chuse but save you.

Enter HENRY.

Henry. You must forgive me. Though your ser-nts were drawn up to oppose my entrance, I broke rough all their files, forced on by gratitude that nothing could withstand, till I beheld my benefactor.

Penrud. Not much of a benefactor; I have only restored to you what my conscience could not eep.

Mrs. W. In the name of goodness, what is it you ave done?

Penrud. Nothing, but wanted stomarch for a banquet where your son was served up; in plainer words, preferred my own cottage to his country house: Henry wanted a wife, a wife wanted a settlement, and I stood in need of neither.—I hope you and Tempest are agreed.

Henry. A word from your lawyer silenced all objection.—Oh! my dear mother, help me to some words that may express my gratitude.

Penrud. No, no, she is mute by compromise: when I am quietly retiring from the stage of this vain world, call me not back to lose the little grace that I have gained: I would not be made a spectacle in my decline and dotage.

Mrs. W. Will you again sequester yourself, and renounce the society even of your most grateful friends?

Penrud. Madam, I have yet perused but half the history of man: the pages are alternate, dark and bright: I have read the former only: let Henry's virtue stand the test, and I have all the pleasurable study still to come.

Enter TEMPEST *and* EMILY.

Temp. I have broke through all forms, worthy in bringing you a saucy girl, who will fancy sh privileged to pay her court to every generous c racter, that does honour to humanity, and is bounti to her friends.

Penrud. I confess to you, Mr. Tempest, I was ambitious to behold your fair daughter, but did not presume to expect the visit should spring with her.—I hope, madam, there is something here present mo amusing to your sight than a crabbed old clown, wh happens to have a little more kindness at his hea than he carries in his countenance.

Emily. True generos[illegible] is above grimace: it is not always that the eye, w[illegible]ch pities, is accompanied by the hand that bestows: some there are, who can smile without friendship, and weep without charity.

Penrud. Certainly, madam, this world is a great polisher; it makes smooth faces and slippery friendships.—Are you, may I ask, very fond of this fine town?

Emily. My father lives in it; I should be loth to say I had a preference for any other.

Penrud. I suppose, Mr. Tempest, you are one of the vainest men in England.

Temp. One of the happiest I am, and of your making: for Henry Woodville ever had my warmest wishes.

Penrud. And I hope your lovely daughter meets those wishes with all dutiful compliance?

Temp. With the best grace in life? she does not object to take the man of her heart, though I wish to join their hands.

Mrs. W. Now, my Henry, you are, without comparison, the happiest, or, without pity, the most miserable of mankind: here, if you fail in merit, you offend beyond the reach of mercy.

Penrud. True, madam: but the sons of Cornelia did not disgrace their mother.

Temp. There again! that's something out of a book, like Emily's Agamemnon, and if it was treason I could not find it out.—But come, Henry! here, in the presence of your benefactor, I bestow upon you all I am worth [*Joins their hands.*]—a virtuous daughter, the only joy and blessing of my life: money I have none, for I did not understand the arts of government; and when Emily is gone from me, I am without resources: for I cannot, like Mr. Penruddock, take shelter with the sciences: and as for the arts,

damn me if I believe I have genius enough to aspire to the composition of a cabbage-net.

Emily. Oh! my dear father, let me conjure you to believe, that those resources which my duty, my affection, have hitherto supplied, shall be doubled to you in future, when I have so kind a partner in that pleasing task.

Henry. When you are not welcome to me, I must cease to be worthy of my Emily.—If books do not serve for a resource, and ancient history is too remote, we can find heroes in modern times; and you shall fight over your battles as often as you please.

Temp. That is very pleasant, I confess, for there I can come on a little; but then I grow warm with the subject, and Emily, snubs me for swearing; which you know, Mr. Penruddock, every soldier is privileged to do.

Penrud. I did not know that was among their privileges; but this I know, they cannot, in my opinion, have too many! and heartily I wish they had more and better than what you have named.

Enter SYDENHAM.

Syden. I must either have the impudence of the devil, or veneration for your character, Mr. Penruddock, which apologizes for impudence, when I venture to appear in your presence, after what I foolishly said to you in our late conversation.

Penrud. Mr. Sydenham, I cannot allow you to call that language foolish, which springs from a heart that runs over with benevolence: as well you may blaspheme the bounty of the Nile, because it breaks loose from its channel, and overflows its banks.

Syden. Thank you, my dear sir, thank you heartily: I have been as sour as crab-juice with the malice of

mankind, now I am all ity and honey, and shall slip through the rest of my dahi in harmony and good-humour.—Ah! Henry — Tempest — Emily — Mrs. Woodville—all smiling!—Why I am like the man in the almanack, turn which way I will, a happy constellation looks me in the face.

Penrud. Now you have joined us, our circle is complete.

Syden. [*Advances with* PENRUDDOCK.] Ah! no, no, no; while contrition asks admittance to atone for injuries, humanity can never shut its door, and say, "my circle is complete"—

Penrud. What do you mean?

Syden. Woodville is in your house.

Penrud. Hah! Woodville! have you brought him hither?

Syden. No; we called at Tempest's, heard of your generous acts, and his poor wounded heart now melts with gratitude: even my flint was softened.

Penrud. Well, well, it shall be so—keep the company together in my absence—such meetings should be private. [*Exit.*

Mrs. W. Oh! Sydenham, generous friend! I heard the name of Woodville, and I know your intercession points at him. Heaven prosper it! But can it be? I doubt, I doubt this injury is too deep.

Syden. Doubt nothing. I am confident of success —when the ice thaws, the river flows; so is it with the human charities, when melted by benevolence.

Henry. Oh! what a soul is thine! whose ardour even impossibilities can't check,

Emily. The attempt is bold; but mark if this is not among the impossibilities that sometimes come to pass.

Henry. Look, look! your angry lover—

Emily. Alas! has this poor gentleman no friend to save him from exposing himself?

Syden. The Governor begins to bristle—walk aside, take no notice, and I'll accost him.—

Enter SIR DAVID DAW.

Now, my brave knight!
Why glows that angry spot upon your cheek?
What do those boots portend; and whither bound?

Sir D. D. Mr. Sydenham, I am just now in no humour for jesting; neither does my business lie with you.

Temp. With me then—What would my noble baronet be pleased to say?

Sir D. D. I am not pleased at all, Governor Tempest, and therefore it matters little what I say: I called at your door, and was directed to you hither, so I made free to step in; and now, to say truth, I don't care how soon I step out, for my chaise is in waiting, and I am equipped, as you see, for my peremptory departure.

Temp. Let us part friends, however; if you can charge me fairly, do so! I'll not flinch.

Sir D. D. No, but you will fly out, and that is worse.

Temp. Not I: carry no grievances with you into Wales; I'll be calm as water, say what you will.

Sir D. D. Oh! then I can say enough—Did you not consent to my proposing for your daughter?

Temp. Why, I did consent, I don't deny it; and if Emily had not objected to your proposals, I should not have quarrelled with your property; but I am not such a Blue-beard to deliver my daughter, bound hands and feet, into your castle. If you had not the gift of recommending yourself, am I to blame for that?

Sir D. D. Am I? Miss Emily can witness I took due pains.

Emily. Oh! yes; and let not my obstinacy disc[our]age you; for be assured, that half those pains, bestowed upon a hear[t le]ss constant to its first attachment, and more [mindfu]l of its worldly interests, will command success, [wh]ever you think fit to repeat the experiment.

Temp. There—there—what more is to be said?—you see how the case stands: I had no absolute controul over my daughter's affections, and somebody else had.

Sir D. D. Well, sir, I understand you now; and if you are only Governor abroad, and not at home—

Temp. What then, sir?

Sir D. D. Why then, I am your very humble servant. [*Exit.*

Temp. Well—your humble servant, if you come to that; and a good journey to you—aye, and a good riddance to boot. Is not it so, my Emily? What does that David think

"I wear my heart upon my sleeve,
For *Daws* to peck at?"

Enter PENRUDDOCK, *leading in* WOODVILLE.

Penrud. Mrs. Woodville, your husband and I have concurred in opinion, that the only way of adjusting [s]uch differences as subsisted between us, is by con[sig]ning them at once to oblivion, trusting that you [an]d Henry also will do the same by those errors, [whi]ch now are fortunately healed, and can never be [re]peated.

Wood. Humbled as I am in conscience, and [o]verwhelmed by generosity, I am ill able to find [w]ords for what, in circumstances like mine, I ought [t]o say to each here present in particular, and all in [g]eneral. Wherever I direct my eyes, they are sa-

[un]ited with a countenance, which, though entitled to reproach me, seems to hold forth promises of [par]don: but, perhaps, even from [gui]lt, like mine, some good may be extracted: and [my so]n, when he shall be blest with a [w]ife, lovely and [virtuo]us as his mother, will recollect the follies of his [fa]ther, and avoid his fate.

Penrud. Here we conclude.—We all have cause of thankfulness, but I the most; for I have escaped the perils of prosperity: the sudden onset staggered me: but temperate recollection, and the warning calls of some here present, taught me to know, that the true use of riches is to share them with the worthy; and the sole remedy for injuries, to forgive them.

THE END.